

given keys to the current as well as the next segment. This will give the caching server enough time to distribute the next segment keys during the current segment.

IN THE CLAIMS

1-3. (Previously canceled)

4. (Presently amended) A method of multicasting comprising:

~~providing program content for multicasting to a plurality of clients;~~

encrypting a first portion of said a program content by utilizing a first key so as to produce an encrypted first portion of said program content;

providing said a plurality of clients with said first key;

multicasting said encrypted first portion of said program content to said plurality of clients ~~prior to said plurality of clients indicating an intent to purchase said program content;~~

encrypting a second portion of said program content with a second key that is different from the first key so as to produce an encrypted second portion of said program content;

providing said second key to at least one client; and

multicasting said encrypted second portion of said program content to said plurality of clients.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Presently amended) The method as described in claim 4 and further comprising:

~~prompting a user~~ the at least one client with an offer to purchase said second portion of said program content.

7-8. (Canceled)

9. (Presently amended) The method as described in claim 8 6 wherein said second key is encrypted ~~under~~ using a third key and wherein said third key is provided to a ~~purchasing client~~ the at least one client after the purchase of said second portion of said program content.

10. (Presently amended) A method comprising:

~~providing program content for multicasting;~~

multicasting a first portion of said a program content to a plurality of clients ~~at no charge~~ unencrypted;

~~providing a guaranteed time period during multicasting of said first portion of said program content;~~

~~estimating a number of clients that will purchase said program content during said guaranteed time period;~~

receiving at least one order ~~orders~~ for said program content from at least one purchasing client during ~~said guaranteed time period~~ the multicasting of the first portion;

providing an initial a key distribution period ~~having a duration operable to provide cryptographic keys to said at least one purchasing client so as to allow reception of said~~

~~program content not to be interrupted at said at least one purchasing client in response to~~
the at least one order; and

multicasting a second portion of the program content to the plurality of clients
wherein the second portion of the program content is encrypted using the key.

11-12. (Canceled)

13. (Presently amended) The method as described in claim 10 and further comprising:

estimating an estimated number of purchasing clients;

determining an actual number of purchasing clients;

determining that said actual number of purchasing clients is greater than said
estimated number of clients; and

~~extending said initial key distribution period so as to allow presentation of said~~
~~program content not to be interrupted at said at least one purchasing client~~ a time period
for distribution of the key.

14-18. (Canceled)

19. (Presently amended) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable
code for performing a method comprising:

~~providing program content for multicasting to a plurality of clients;~~

encrypting a first portion of ~~said~~ a program content by utilizing a first key so as to
produce an encrypted first portion of said program content;

providing said plurality of clients with said first key;

multicasting said encrypted first portion of said program content to said plurality of clients ~~prior to said plurality of clients indicating an intent to purchase said program content;~~

encrypting a second portion of said program content with a second key that is different from the first key so as to produce an encrypted second portion of said program content;

providing said second key to at least one client; and

multicasting said encrypted second portion of said program content to said at least one client.

20. (Presently amended) The computer-readable medium as described in claim 19 and further comprising computer-executable code operable for performing:

~~encrypting~~ decrypting said first portion of said program content with said first key for a predetermined period of time so as to allow a user to obtain a free preview of said program content.

21. (Presently amended) The computer-readable medium as described in claim 19 and further comprising computer-executable code operable for performing:

~~prompting a user~~ the at least one client with an offer to purchase said second portion of said program content.

22-23. (Canceled)

24. (Presently amended) The computer-readable medium as described in claim ~~23~~ 21 and further comprising computer-executable code for encrypting said second key ~~under~~ using a third key and providing said third key to a ~~purchasing~~ the at least one client after the purchase of said second portion of said program content.

25. (Presently amended) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable code for performing a method comprising:

~~providing program content for multicasting;~~

~~multicasting a first portion of said a~~ program content to a plurality of clients ~~at no~~ charge unencrypted;

~~providing a guaranteed time period during multicasting of said first portion of said~~ program content;

~~estimating a number of clients that will purchase said program content during said~~ guaranteed time period;

~~receiving at least one order~~ orders for said program content from at least one purchasing client during ~~said guaranteed time period~~ the multicasting of the first portion;

~~providing an initial a key distribution period having a duration operable to provide~~ cryptographic keys to ~~said at least one purchasing client so as to allow reception of said~~ program content ~~not to be interrupted at said at least one purchasing client~~ in response to the at least one order; and

multicasting a second portion of the program content to the plurality of clients wherein the second portion of the program content is encrypted using the key.

26-27. (Canceled)

28. (Presently amended) The computer-readable medium as described in claim 25 and further comprising computer-executable code operable for performing:

estimating an estimated number of purchasing clients;

determining an actual number of purchasing clients;

determining that said actual number of purchasing clients is greater than said estimated number of clients; and

~~extending said initial key distribution period so as to allow presentation of said program content not to be interrupted at said at least one purchasing client~~ a time period for distribution of the key.

29. (Canceled)

30. (New) The method as described in claim 4 and further comprising:

estimating an estimated number of purchasing clients;

determining an actual number of purchasing clients;

determining that said actual number of purchasing clients is greater than said estimated number of clients; and

extending a time period for distribution of the second key.

31. (Presently amended) The method as described in claim 10 and further comprising:

prompting the at least one purchasing client with an offer to purchase said second portion of said program content.

32. (New) The computer-readable medium as described in claim 19 and further comprising computer-executable code operable for performing:

estimating an estimated number of purchasing clients;

determining an actual number of purchasing clients;

determining that said actual number of purchasing clients is greater than said estimated number of clients; and

extending a time period for distribution of the key.

33. (Presently amended) The computer-readable medium as described in claim 25 and further comprising computer-executable code operable for performing:

prompting the at least one purchasing client with an offer to purchase said second portion of said program content.

34. (New) A method of processing program content comprising:

receiving a first encryption key;

receiving a first portion of a program content wherein the first portion of the program content is encrypted using the first encryption key;

decrypting the first portion of the program content using the first encryption key;

receiving a second encryption key different from the first encryption key;

receiving a second portion of the program content wherein the second portion of the program content is encrypted using the second encryption key; and

decrypting the second portion of the program content using the second encryption key.

35. (New) The method of claim 34 further comprising:

prompting a user with an offer to purchase said second portion of said program content.

36. (New) A method of processing program content comprising:

receiving a first portion of a program content wherein the first portion of the program content is unencrypted;

receiving a first encryption key;

receiving a second portion of the program content wherein the second portion of the program content is encrypted using the first encryption key; and

decrypting the second portion of the program content using the first encryption key.

37. (New) The method of claim 36 further comprising:

prompting a user with an offer to purchase said second portion of said program content.

38. (New) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable code for performing a method of processing program content comprising:

receiving a first encryption key;

receiving a first portion of a program content wherein the first portion of the program content is encrypted using the first encryption key;

decrypting the first portion of the program content using the first encryption key;

receiving a second encryption key different from the first encryption key;

receiving a second portion of the program content wherein the second portion of the program content is encrypted using the second encryption key; and

decrypting the second portion of the program content using the second encryption key.

39. (New) The computer-readable medium as described in claim 38 and further comprising computer-executable code operable for performing:

prompting a user with an offer to purchase said second portion of said program content.

40. (New) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable code for performing a method of processing program content comprising:

receiving a first portion of a program content wherein the first portion of the program content is unencrypted;

receiving a first encryption key;